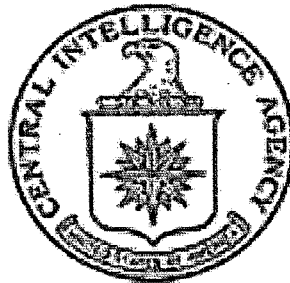


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CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY SUMMARY



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE

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seizure of a Caracas radio station on 12 September by a national guard officer who reportedly hoped to inspire co-conspirators to fulfill a revolutionary plan originally set for 10 September.

Arcaya's resignation may have been regarded by anti-government elements as creating a weak point in the united front of Venezuela's three major parties which have made up the government coalition since President Betancourt's inauguration in February 1959. These left-of-center parties--Betancourt's Democratic Action (AD) group; the Christian Democratic COPEI, and the Republican Demo-

cratic Union (URD)--have presented a united civilian front against the recurring threat of a new dictatorship by Venezuela's traditionally political armed forces.

Little unity has been possible, however, either within or among the parties on the Cuban issue. Betancourt has indicated that he does not want the resignation of the pro-Cuban Arcaya, who is prominent in the URD, to be the cause for breaking the coalition. Betancourt believes that many URD members are disillusioned with their party and could eventually be convinced to leave it.

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REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

The confusion surrounding the Congo situation has been compounded by two coups attempted against Premier Lumumba. President Kasavubu's effort to dismiss the premier and appoint moderate Joseph Ileo, the president of the Senate, in his stead did not receive popular or military support, and Ileo chose the safety of Brazzaville in President Youlou's Congo Republic instead of the political struggle in Leopoldville. In fact, both Kasavubu and Ileo have moved so slowly that American Embassy officials describe their pace as snail-like, and report that Kasavubu "acts more like a vegetable every day."

On 14 September, Colonel Mobutu, newly appointed army commander in chief, announced that the army was taking charge and would enforce a truce until 31 December, thus enabling the

rival political factions to reach an agreement. During the interim a "collect" of Congolese students and technicians would run the Congo in cooperation with the UN. He proposed to stop the Congo's drift toward Communism by closing the Soviet and Czech embassies and consulates, placing military guards around the premises, and forcing the diplomats to leave within 48 hours.

In the absence of disorders or strong reactions on the part of leading Congolese politicians, it appeared that the coup might be succeeding. However, by mid-morning of 15 September, forces loyal to Lumumba seemed to have regained the initiative. Lumumba's claim that Mobutu had been arrested was subsequently denied, however. The situation remains extremely fluid, with the sympathies of the bulk of the Congolese Army unclear.

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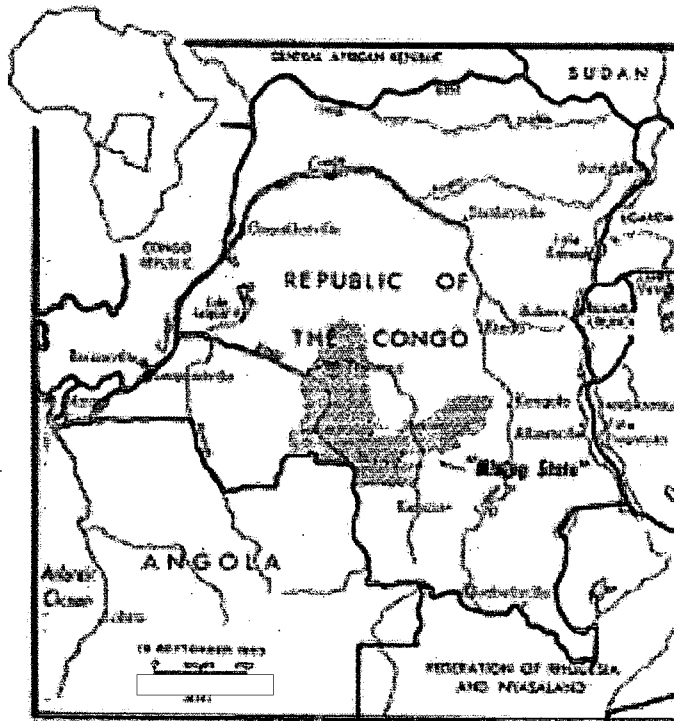
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Lumumba, after beating off Kasavubu's effort to dismiss him, called a rump session of the National Assembly which on 13 September voted him undefined "full powers," and backed his attacks on the UN's role in the Congo. The premier apparently hopes to use this action--challenged by the opposition on the grounds a quorum was lacking--to justify the establishment of a dictatorship.

The premier's ability to retain power has made the UN task vastly more difficult. Further trouble for Secretary General Hammarskjold has arisen from several of the African states which sympathize with Lumumba's proclaimed efforts to preserve the unity of the Congo and to combat foreign--notably Belgian and French--imperialism. Guinea, Ghana, Sudan, and the UAR have all threatened to withdraw troops from the UN Command and implied that they would be put at Lumumba's disposal. Within the last few days, however, as the UN relaxed its control of the Leopoldville radio station and airfields, Ghana and Sudan have adopted a more conciliatory policy toward the secretary general.

Nevertheless, Hammarskjold has been handicapped in his efforts in the Security Council to get backing for a tough policy in the Congo by the wavering of Afro-Asian governments,



whose fears have been exploited by the USSR. The council session on 12 September was adjourned because all contemplated measures would have aided Lumumba, not Kasavubu; the session on 14 September was adjourned when Tunisia proposed a good-offices commission to mediate between opposing Congolese factions--a step which would seem to accord equal recognition to Kasavubu and Lumumba.

For several days there has been a lessening of bloodshed in the Kasai area, although it is not clear whether this has resulted from the general ceasefire which the UN announced on 10 September had been ordered by the Congolese Army. This easing of the situation was probably in part a result of the UN's prohibition against other

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air flights in the Congo. This restriction had grounded the ten Soviet Il-14s which had been used to transport some 200 Lumumba troops to the Kasai battlefield. With the relaxation of the UN restrictions, Lumumba will probably give new attention to the Kasai secessionist problem in an effort to clean up the area preparatory to an all-out Katanga campaign.

Following the small-scale action at two points along the Katanga-Kivu frontier last week, the Katanga border remained quiet until 13 September, when reports reached Elisabethville that 300 Congolese troops loyal to Lumumba were attempting to invade Katanga from Kivu. At the same time, President Tshombé's Katanga regime was confronted with an apparently serious uprising by Baluba tribesmen at Nanono.

Tshombé welcomed Ileo's designation as premier and has sent two representatives to meet with Ileo's delegates in Brazzaville to discuss a federated Congo. At the same time, Tshombé continues to make statements favoring complete independence for Katanga. This apparently is largely a bargaining tactic, but also designed to appeal to local advocates of a separate Katanga.

Communist-Bloc Moves

The Communist bloc is becoming more involved in the Congo situation. Khrushchev, in the strongest Soviet attack on Hammarskjöld to date, charged on 13 September that the UN secretary general is "consciously working in the interests of the imperialists" in the Congo and that his actions "dovetail with

the policies of the countries which have always espoused the positions of colonialism." Answering questions aboard the Baltika, the Soviet premier denounced Hammarskjöld's insistence that all aid to the Congo Government be channeled through the UN as a further effort to uphold colonialist interests, and indicated that he may press the Congo issue at the forthcoming UN General Assembly meeting.

In the fifth Soviet Government statement on the subject, issued on 9 September, the USSR accused Hammarskjöld of failing to show the "minimum of impartiality" and of "openly working for the benefit of the colonialists, thereby compromising the UN." Moscow demanded that UN forces occupying Congolese airfields and radio stations be dismissed, and called on the governments whose troops are in the Congo to carry out the "good, correct decisions" of the Security Council, bypassing the UN Command if necessary.

The USSR's reply on 10 September to a note from Hammarskjöld regarding direct Soviet aid to the Congo indicated Moscow's intention to continue its unilateral support for Lumumba. The Soviet note stated that the Security Council resolutions "do not and cannot restrict" the right of the Congolese Government to request and receive assistance directly from governments of other countries and asserted that Soviet aid in the form of civil aircraft and motor vehicles was "fully consistent" with these resolutions. Moscow expressed surprise that the secretary general was attempting to control the Congo's relations with other states, specifically the USSR.

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SITUATION IN LAOS

The situation in Laos has taken a new and more critical turn with the repudiation of the Souvanna Phouma government by General Phoumi and Prince Boun Oun. Their self-styled "Revolutionary Committee" proclaimed over Radio Savannakhet on 10 September that it had temporarily set aside the Constitution, "ousted" the Souvanna government, and decreed martial law throughout Laos. All military commanders, civil servants, and people were requested to recognize the authority of committee Chairman Boun Oun and to disregard Vientiane's orders.

Boun Oun is the 50-year-old hereditary ruler of southern Laos who renounced his claims in 1946 in favor of a unified Laos under the King of Luang Prabang. Described as an earthy, practical man of action, Boun Oun is believed to have chafed in recent years over the lack of scope offered for his energies by his sinecure position as inspector general of the Kingdom. Boun Oun was an anti-Japanese resistance leader in World War II, and in 1954 he led commando troops against the invading Viet Minh. He was premier in 1949-50. He favors alignment with the West and the imposition of authoritarian government.

While in effect setting up a de facto government in Savannakhet, Boun Oun and Phoumi apparently do not intend this to be a separatist regime, at least at this time. They have pledged support to King Savang and sent emissaries to Luang Prabang to explain their actions to the monarch.

The Savannakhet group claims the loyalty of all four military region commanders outside of Vientiane, as well as ten of the country's 12 provincial governors, but their sustained allegiance and unity of purpose is open to question. The first military region commander, with headquarters in Luang Prabang, has reversed himself twice and now seems tentatively to be supporting the Souvanna government. The loyalty of lower echelon military units is even more difficult to assess. Boun Oun and Phoumi will require outside financial and logistic support if they are to carry out their plans.

Thus far, Souvanna has reacted to the Boun Oun - Phoumi challenge with moderation, apparently still hoping for a compromise. He has declared a state of emergency throughout the country, but has not yet branded Phoumi and Boun Oun as

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